

THE RISE THE RISE OF PUBLIC SCHOOL ADULT EDUCATION THE RISE

Vol. I, No. 6, February 1961

Dear Colleague:

Although not mentioning adult education specifically, President-Elect John F. Kennedy's Task Force Committee on Education has called for federal funds to go to schools in the large metropolitan areas "for the improvement of programs of community service." The Task Force also has recommended federal support to the states (1) for constructing educational television networks, (2) for taking immediate action to establish a President's Advisory Committee on Education, and (3) doing away with the student disclaimer affidavit in the loan program of the National Defense Education Act.

At presstime, the Kennedy Administration's school support bill has not yet been introduced. Although the 87th Congress convened on January 3, the new Administration decided that its program would not really be operating until their man was in the White House. The education bill is expected to be introduced by Frank Thompson (D.-N.J.) and would call for about \$925 million a year to go to the states for their use as the states themselves determine their needs -- for teacher salaries, school construction, or some combination of these purposes. With the possibility of federal support for education more probable now than at any other time, it is urgent that adult educators realize the implications for their programs. As sources of new funds become available to school districts, the decision as to whether any part of it will go to the support of general adult education depends in large measure on the extent to which the case can be convincingly made that schools have a responsibility for the education of all citizens irrespective of age. It is equally important that conferences and discussions about the adaptability of school facilities for adult use be initiated long before architects' plans reach the drawing board.

On the first day Congress convened, Sen. Warren Magnuson (D.-Wash.) re-introduced a bi-partisan bill to award each state and the District of Columbia \$1 million each to buy and install equipment for educational television stations. Magnuson was joined in sponsoring the bill by Sen. Andrew F. Schoeppel (R.-Kan.). Funds would be used only for equipment and not for station personnel or program service. Of 257 educational channels available, only 52 are on the air.

State legislative bodies convened in most of the states last month, and adult education continues to be on the docket of many. In California, an interim committee of the legislature has again examined the state-aid program and may recommend a decrease in state support for all programs except certain remedial and academic programs. Adult education leaders in California are confident that the present program will be maintained, but not without their again organizing and maintaining an intensive statewide program of interpretation.

In New York State, the state education department is considering eliminating all funds for special programs or combining twenty different kinds of special aid -- including aid to adult education -- into a single sum. Under this second proposal, local school administrators could decide for themselves how much should be allotted to each special program. These proposals have met strong opposition from local administrators who say this will weaken adult education in the state.



The American Medical Association was accused of stacking the White House Conference on Aging with physicians favoring their point of view (2,700 delegates participated in the meeting), but educators made up about 20 percent of the delegates. The medical care controversy did not slip over into the Education Section and federal support to the states for building and extending educational programs for the aging was quickly approved.

The Education Section of the White House Conference on Aging was, in effect, a top-level policy meeting of key leaders in adult education. Many NAPSAE members were in key leadership positions including President S.E. Hand (Tallahassee, Fla.), Past President Carl Minich (Snyder, N.Y.), and President-Elect Wilmer V. Bell (Baltimore, Md.). Other NAPSAE members who served as group leaders or consultants were Mrs. C.E. Anderson (Columbia, S.C.), A. Larrivière (Baton Rouge, La.), Roy Minnis (Washington, D.C.), John Cass (Augusta, Me.), Alton Hadlock (Salt Lake City, Utah), Thomas J. McLernon (Washington, D.C.), Stanley Sworder (Sacramento, Calif.), Selmer Wake (Santa Barbara, Calif.), and Mrs. Henrietta Rabe (Albany, N.Y.) Many other NAPSAE members attended the Conference as official delegates from their states. Wilmer Bell and Robert Luke were on the Editorial Committee which formulated the final Education Section policy statement.

The policy statement held no surprise but did re-affirm emerging concepts about the relationship of education to better programs for and about aging. It recommended that special services for the aging be integrated into existing services of adult education wherever these existed, and that public expenditures be increased for this kind of adult education. The statement also pointed out that the basic responsibility for education in the country rests with the schools, institutions of higher learning, and libraries which have the basic responsibility for education -- that these agencies have a special responsibility to provide the leadership training, program consultation, research, and instructional materials utilized by churches, labor organizations, industry, the voluntary organizations, and organizations of older people in carrying out their own educational programs.

Will this Conference be different from any of its predecessors in getting words translated into action with some immediacy? So far as adult education is concerned, there is a fighting chance that it may. Under the leadership of George Mann, Technical Director of the Education Section, and NAPSAE member from Arlington, (Va.), a unique plan has been developed to begin putting wheels under the recommendations as fast as possible. On January 26 and 27, Dr. Mann called to Washington a group of 12 leading educators in the country to discuss ways and means of translating the Conference recommendations into a strategy of program development. Two NAPSAE past presidents, R.J. Pulling (1954-55) and E.D. Goldman (1958-59), were members of that follow-up group.

Between Conference sessions, 15 state directors of adult education and several NAPSAE past presidents, met at NAPSAE headquarters for dinner and a conference of their own. Items of discussion: 1. ways and means of continuing their self-education project initiated at Princeton Inn and Arden House under NAPSAE sponsorship with Fund for Adult Education financing, and 2. ways in which the states could participate in the new liberal adult education development projects to be undertaken by NAPSAE in 1961-62.

The salary-scale for teachers of adults in Baltimore, Md., has been revised to include an important new professional incentive. For all teachers who have had three years of adult education experience -- and also have two credit hours of graduate education in adult education -- an additional \$1.00 increment per two-hour session is now being made. The increment is limited to professional study in the area of the teacher-learning approach between teachers of adults and their students.

NAPSAE's new membership rate of \$10.00 for Active Membership went into effect on January 1. Present members are reminded that they will not be billed at the higher rate until after July 1. Robert Coates, Membership Chairman, reports that an encouraging number of new memberships are already coming in at the \$10.00 rate. This is particularly gratifying since NAPSAE has not made a sustained drive for new full-time members since before the action on the raise in dues was taken at Denver.

All Active Members of the Association will receive a copy of the new NAPSAE membership directory within a few days. The directory lists approximately 1,000 members of the Association formerly called "administrator members." These are primarily local and state directors although some teachers of adults are included.

Why is NAPSAE membership growing? There are many reasons, but certainly one is the energy and enthusiasm of some members of the Association in calling the attention of others to its services. Mrs. Helen Lynch, formerly Supervisor, Division of Americanization and Adult Education, Board of Education, Chicago, wrote in shortly after the first of the year to notify us of a change of address. Parenthetically, she mentioned she needed some new membership supplies -- that she had sent more than 550 NAPSAE promotion letters to prospects in Illinois. In replying to her, Jack Parker, NAPSAE's Assistant Executive Secretary, said, "When I'm in a dreamy mood, I like to think what would happen to our membership if every single Membership Coordinator showed the dedication to their Association which you have shown. We'd have so many members we wouldn't know how to keep track of them. Believe me, those of us close to the membership scene appreciate more deeply than I can say the work you have done for NAPSAE." (Our Membership Chairman authorized a reimbursement to Mrs. Lynch for postage and envelopes!)

Good news from California! At a meeting of the San Francisco Board of Education on December 13, fees were eliminated from the adult program effective with the spring term 1961. The vote was 4 to 2. Guess what? There was strong opposition from the local Chamber of Commerce. Surprise?

In the December issue of PULSE, we reported that the Tax Research Committee of the Chamber of Commerce in Gary, Ind., recommended a cut in the budget from \$311,681 to \$150,000. This was an error. The Chamber's recommended cut was to \$250,000. Louis McElroy, director of the program, reports that at the final budget hearing the Chamber withdrew its recommendation and the original budget still stands.

It is with deep regret that we announce the death of two long-time members of NAPSAE. Lewis Erckert, Director of Adult Education in Palm Beach County, Fla., died unexpectedly at his home in mid-December. Several days earlier, Francis Froelicher, Specialist on Education for the Aging with the Department of Education in Baltimore, died after a long illness.

It is extremely difficult, as all directors of adult education know, to measure how much an adult education program improves the level of a community. So it should be encouraging to all local directors to know of the comment made by the editor of the FLINT (Mich.) JOURNAL to the local director, Dr. Myrtle Black. In a letter written to Dr. Black, the editor said, "Most of us here at the Journal are aware of recent improvements in the intelligence level of our readers. It is reflected in the quality of letters to the editor we receive and in telephone complaint inquiries. As a result, we can aim at a bit higher reader capacity. This great asset to our committee, we attribute to the large numbers making use of Flint's educational and cultural opportunities."

The educational level of the Mott Foundation program staff of the Flint Board of Education is pretty high also! A fifth member was recently awarded a Doctor of Philosophy Degree -- making Flint probably the only adult education service anywhere with five staff members holding such degrees. The newest Ph.D. is Allen J. Matherne. Others with the advanced degree on the Flint adult education staff in addition to Dr. Matherne and Dr. Black are Marvin R. Sitts, George Chamis, and Ferne Williams.

A boon for the person offering business education adult classes is available from the United Business Education Association. Traditionally, the January issue of The Forum, the official publication of UBEA, has a special feature on some aspect of business education. The January issue was on "adult classes in business education." Attractive reprints are available from UBEA headquarters (an NEA Department located at 1201 Sixteenth Street, N.W., Washington 6, D.C.) for \$1.00. If you prefer, send orders to us and we will take them down the hall to the proper office.

NAPSAE's new television film, "Learning to Live," (see PULSE, January, 1961) may wind up being even more popular than we anticipated. The 30-minute documentary, being filmed in Baltimore, Md., and Snyder and Niagara Falls, N.Y., was listed on the latest NAPSAE financial statement as: Production of Movie Entitled LEARNING TO LOVE! Almost hate to correct it. Think of the Trendex Rating we'd get!

Cordially,

Robert A. Luke
Executive Secretary

P.S. The 1961 NAPSAE Conference will meet at the Sheraton-Park Hotel in Washington, D.C., on November 9, 10, and 11. Most directors we know need to put in their request for travel for professional meetings during the next school year sometime this spring. How about you?

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